

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
Magnetic Resonance Scanners for the Osteoarthritis Initiative
NIH-NIAMS-02-003

Title: Magnetic Resonance Scanners for the Osteoarthritis Initiative
Solicitation Number: NIH-NIAMS-02-003
Current Response Date: 4:30 p.m., local time, July 2, 2002

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, National Institutes of Health, requests information on specifications and pricing for the future selection and purchase of 4 to 6 magnetic resonance (MR) scanners (1.5 Tesla) with extremity coils to be used for a large, multicenter study of osteoarthritis, the Osteoarthritis Initiative. The goals of the Osteoarthritis Initiative are to develop research resources that facilitate the development and evaluation of clinical biomarkers that support the efficacy and safety of disease-modifying therapies. Partial fulfillment of this goal requires obtaining high quality, state of the science images of the knee joint from 5000 enrolled study participants with magnetic resonance imaging technology. In order to insure uniform consistency and quality, new, dedicated, identical MR scanners will be purchased by each of the clinical centers where participants will be enrolled. These MR units to be installed at the various clinical sites are required to be dedicated, high-resolution magnetic resonance imaging scanners with readily up-gradable platforms. The offeror should describe how protection against obsolescence of the original platform over the 7-year period would be provided in a manner that also provides longitudinal comparisons for all scan data. Please specify the upgrade method/process to keep releases of hardware and software equipment current. Installation of these units will require renovations of existing space for installation so any advantage offered related to portability, installation, or shipping should be described. The MR units will require routine and frequent maintenance (costs for service agreements should be offered) and be expected to operate with >98% "up time". Technical assistance will also be needed from the vendor in deciding scanning parameters for optimal and maximal "usability" of data from scans. Input from company scientists related to the development of imaging protocols, machine usage, data processing and analysis and participation in steering committee meetings is desirable. It is essential that the MR hardware selected be able to provide "state of the science" imaging data with broad applicability and potential to up grade over the seven year course of the study period. A track record with musculoskeletal imaging would be desirable.

In response to this request for information, vendors should provide: 1) Specifications and pricing for the future selection and purchase of 4 to 6 magnetic resonance (MR) scanners (1.5 Tesla) with extremity coils; 2) A description of how protection against obsolescence of the original platform over the 7-year period would be provided in a manner that also provides longitudinal comparisons for all scan data; 3) Specifications and pricing for maintenance of the scanners over the 7-year period of the study; 4) Explain any advantages that can be offered related to portability, installation, or shipping; 5) A narrative of the vendor's capability to provide technical assistance in determining the scanning parameters for optimal and maximal

“usability” of data from scans and input from company scientists related to the development of imaging protocols, machine usage, data processing and analysis and participation in Osteoarthritis Initiative Steering Committee Meetings.

Based upon market research, the Government is not using the policies contained in Part 12, Acquisition of Commercial Items, in its solicitation for the described supplies or services. However, interested persons may identify to the Contracting Officer their interest and capability to satisfy the Government’s requirement with a commercial item within 15 days of this notice.

The information requested herein, should be labeled with the number: RFI NIH-NIAMS-02-003. The information is due to be submitted to the Contracting Officer at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., local time, on Tuesday, July 2, 2002:

Eileen Webster-Cissel
Chief Contracting Officer
Contracts Management Branch
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, NIH
One Democracy Plaza
6701 Democracy Boulevard, Suite 800, MSC 4872
Bethesda, MD 20892-4872

NOTE: If using Federal Express or courier services, you must use the zip code 20817 instead of 20892-4872.

The point of contact for this notice is Eileen Webster-Cissel, Chief Contracting Officer, who can be contacted by telephone on 301-594-2543, or by Fax (301) 480-5996, or by email (ew52c@nih.gov).